

THE GRAND
CHARTER

OF
Christian Feasts,

WITH THE
Right Way of keeping them.

SERMON

PREACH'D AT A
Meeting of several of the Na-
tives and Inhabitants of the County

OF
BUCKINGHAM,

In the Church of St. Mary Le-Bow, Nov. 30, 1685.

By *Lewis Atterbury* D. D. Rector of *Milton*
in the said County.

L O N D O N,

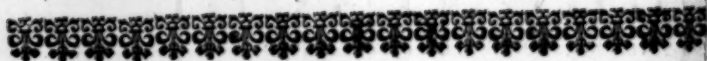
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IMPRIMATUR.

Z. Isbam R.P.D. Henr. Episc.
Lond. a Sacris. 1686.



TO MY
HONOURED
FRIENDS,

The Hon ^{ble} Jam. Herbert,	}	Thomas Atterbury Esq;
William Andrews Esq;		Mr. John Saunders,
John Backwell Esq;		Mr. Edward Carter,
Owen Norton Esq;		Mr. Thomas Woodcock,
Roger Price Esq;		Mr. Benjamin Parrot..

STEWARDS of the *Buckingham-shire* Feast.

Worthy Sirs,

THE particular respects I
have for each of You
personally (as well as
my due regard to those unani-
mous desires, by which I was
summon'd to Your Service) enti-
tle You solely to the following
A 2 Sermon,

The Epistle Dedicatory. /

Sermon, which was preach'd at
Your joint instance, and is now
publish'd for Your satisfaction.
Promoting Charity and mutual
Society is a Design beyond ex-
ception, and the proper Expedi-
ent to heal and compose our pre-
sent Animosities and Divisions.

That your Generous Endeavours may be successful, and the commendable Example, You have given, effectually followed, is the constant desire and daily prayer of

GENTLEMEN,

Your very humble Servant,

Lewis Atterbury.

I COR. V. 8.

Let us therefore keep the Feast, not with the old Leaven, neither with the Leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and Truth.

TH E Jews, formerly Gods only People; who had the custody of his Sacred Oracles (*Rom. 3. 2.*) a Priviledge peculiar to them; *He shewed his words unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any Nation, and for his judgments they have not known them, Psal. 147. 19, 20.*

These had their solemn Feasts on several occasions, and most of them appointed by God himself.

Three times in the year every Male was, by Gods especial Command, to appear before him at *Jerusalem*, and none to come empty handed, viz. at

1. The Feast of unleavened Bread or the Passeeover at the beginning of Harvest, on the 14th of the month *Nisan* or *Abib*, answering to part of our *March* and *April*.

This 14th was called *nē mēga*, the 15th *isēd rē mēga*, and the 16th *avriqā rē mēga*, as *Levit. 23. 11.* where,

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what is rendred the morrow after the Sabbath, is to be understood the morrow after the Paskeover. For in those Feasts, which consisted of many days, the first and last were term'd Sabbaths.

On this *Nwisa*, the beginning of their Harvest was offered a sheaf of the first-fruits to sanctifie all the after-fruits throughout the Land (*Levit. 23. 10.*) and until this was offered, they were neither to eat nor reap the Corn.

2. The Feast of Weeks at the end of Harvest called *Pentecost* (because the fiftieth day after the second of the Paskeover, which fifty days were the time of their Harvest) on this Pentecost were offered two Wave-Loaves, *Levit. 23. 17.* not only as an Eucharistical oblation, but in token of the Harvest finished.

3. The Feast of Tabernacles kept seven days, from the 15th. of the month *Tisri* to the 21st. *Deut. 16. 13, 15.* and *Levit. 23. 34.* which time they dwelt in Tabernacles made of Boughs, after the manner of Arbours, *Plutarch* says principally of Ivy; but we find mention in the Bible of four distinct kinds (*Levit. 23. 40.*) thought to be the Citrine, the Palm, the Myrtle, and the Willow. And this in memory of their Forefathers dwelling in Tents and Tabernacles, as is clear from *Levit. 23. 43.* which is properly rendred Booths, (not as the Caldee Paraphrase, the shadow of a Cloud, in memory of the protection of the Israelites by a Cloud in the Wilderness) or as others, to thank God for their Vintage gathered in at that time of the year.)

The Sacrifices offered were seventy young Bulls, every day alike, only differing in the number, thirteen the first, twelve the second, eleven the third, and

of Christian Feasts.

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and so forwards, according to the Languages of the seventy Nations setting forth their coming in all under the Government of the Messias, the hope and expectation of the Gentiles.

God required also

The New-Moons, the Expiation, the Sabbatical year, and the Jubilee.

1. The Feast of the New-Moons, the First day of the seventh month *Tisri*, *Levit.* 23. 24. The seventh month according to their Sacred, but the first according to their civil accompt, and may be term'd their New-years day.

In this as, in all the New Moons,

1. They repaired to the Prophets, *2 Kings* 4. 22.

2. They neither bought nor sold, *Amos* 8. 4.

3. They had especial Sacrifices (*viz.* two Bullocks, a Ram, and seven Lambs, and one Kid of the Goats) besides the daily Sacrifice, *Numb.* 28. 11. 15. But

1. In this (besides all the aforesaid Sacrifices) there was offered moreover one Bullock, one Ram, seven Lambs, and a Goat, *Numb.* 29. 1, 6.

2. They likewise blowed with Trumpets, *Psal.* 81. 3. some think in memory of *Isaac's* delivery by a Ram. Or,

(2.) (As *St. Basil*) to mind them of the delivery of the Law, for the Trumpets made of Rams Horns, *Josh.* 6. 4. Or,

(3.) As others of the Day of Judgment, which shall be with the Sound of a Trumpet, *Matt.* 24. 31.

2. The Feast of Expiation (commanded *Levit.* 23. 27. *Chap.* 16. 30. *Numb.* 29. 7.) to be the tenth day of the month *Tisri*, our *September*, when sailing dangerous, *Acts* 27. 9.

On this the Priest confessed to God his own and the Peoples sins, and disburthened them on the head of a Scape-goat, in imitation of which the *Grecians*, it's said, used to expiate their Cities by throwing down some condemn'd persons from the Precipices into the Sea, offering them to *Neptune*, with these words, *ἐπί Ιημα ἡμεῶν γὰρ*, *Be thou a reconciliation for us*, and sacrificing men in time of Pestilence, which they call'd *καθάρματα*, both which words the Apostle makes use of *1 Cor. 4. 13.* as *Budeus* observes with allusion to their Customs.

3. As every seventh day was to be a constant Sabbath, a Rest, as the word *Sabbath* (from whence our English word *Sabbath* comes) signifies and is applied Synecdochically to the whole week, *Luke 18. 12.* and to all Festivals, *Ezek. 20. 21.* but usually taken for the seventh day of the week which God hath set apart for his service, call'd (if some other solemn Feast fell in with it) *Sabbathum magnum*, as *John 19. 36.* an High-day, the Feast of the Passeeover happening on it that year.

So every seventh year was to be a Sabbatical year. *Levit. 25. 8, 9.*

The Sabbath-day signified that they themselves were the Lord's, and therefore they ceased from their works to do God's, and the year signified that both they and their Land were the Lord's; for this year their Land was neither till'd nor manur'd, *Levit. 25. 4.* though the owner might gather for the maintenance of himself and family, yet he was not to sow or hedge his field, or lock up his Corn-yard, but let all be common; and then Creditors were to be discharged their debts, whence it was called the Lords Release, *Leut. 15. 1.* And this,

I. To

1. To keep in a dependance on Providence.
2. To mind of *Adams* happy estate in Innocency.
3. To shadow the everlasting Sabbath we are to expect in the Heavens, and this possibly the ground of Rabbi *Elias* his opinion, That the World would last six thousand years, according to that of *St. Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 8. two thousand *invanitatis*, two thousand under the Law, and two thousand under the Messias, which however curious, yet, spoken by a Jew, one of their Rabbies, may serve to convince the Jews, that Christ is come, and the Law ceased.
4. Their last Feast of Divine Institution was the Jubilee celebrated every fiftieth year, *Levit.* 25. 8. after seven Sabbaths of years, call'd so, not from *Jubal* the first Inventer of Musical Instruments, *Gen.* 4. 21. but from *Jobalim*, the Rams Horns sounded at that time, *Levit.* 25. 19.

1. Then (*viz.* on the tenth day) they releas'd Servants.

2. Lands restored to the first Owners who sold them.

3. A true distinction of Tribes preserved by Lands restored, and Servants returned to their Families.

4. As *Grecians* computed by Olympiads, *Romans* by *Lustra*, Christians by Indictions, Jews by Jubilees.

5. Mystically it notes our Jubilee by Christ, by whom a door of hope into Heaven, re-entry thither, and the sound of the Gospel.

They had also their *Purim*, or Feast of Lots, beginning the 14th. of *Adar* (our *February*) and ending the 15th. (*Esther* 9. 21.) instituted by *Mordecai* in remembrance of the delivery of the Jews from *Haman*.

And the Feast of Dedication, practis'd *Nehem.* 12. 27.

at

at the setting up of the Wall of *Jerusalem*, and made a yearly Festival to be kept eight days from the 25th of the month *Casseu* (answering in part to our December) by *Judas Macchabeus*, 1 Maccab. 4. 59. on the Consecration of the Altar.

It is mentioned by St. *John*, Chap. 10. 22. that it was Winter, and Christ then at *Jerusalem*.

THE PATRIARCH *Abraham* made a great Feast at the weaning of *Isaac*, Gen. 21. 8. and *Laban* at the marrying of *Leah*, Gen. 29. 22.

The Jews made Feasts of the Remainders of their Sacrifices, and the Christians had their Love-Feasts to succeed the Lords Supper; their Banquets at the publick Meetings of the Church to testify and nourish brotherly Love; continued near two hundred years after Christ, and then laid aside because of their great Abuse, 1 Cor. 11.

There is, the Royal Preacher tells us, *Eccles.* 3. 4. a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance: We are allow'd to Feast as well as commanded to Fast, and God hath given us his Creatures to this end, Bread to strengthen, and Wine to chear mans heart, and Oyl to make his face to shine, *Psal.* 104. 15. *Solomon*, *Eccles.* 3. 4, 13. tells us, it is the gift of God, nay, Chap. 2. 24. that there is nothing better for a man then to eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labour: And yet there is a sort of morose Brethren that are ready to censure our Christian liberty, (*Gal.* 2. 4.) and put a bad construction on our laudable and well warranted Meeting, *Quorsum hæc perditio*? Wherefore, they say, is all this waste? There are men of this Generation like those our Saviour speaks of, *Luke* 7. 32. that if we pipe will

will not dance, if we mourn will not weep, will make us offenders, be our deportment what it will, never so moderate, never so well governed.

John the Baptist came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine, and yet they said he had a Devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and he is censured as a gluttonous man, a friend of Publicans and sinners; but Wisdom is justified of her Children.

We leave these Cynicks to surfeit on their folly, and, whiles they dig in the Earth, and hide their Talent, without either comfort in it, or improvement of it, (*Matt. 25.*) Our cruise of oil shall not fail, nor our barrel of meal waste, though we thus spend of the one, and use the other, *2 Kings 17. 4.*

Therefore let us keep the Feast. The Feast here meant by *St. Paul* is the Pascheover, the Jews second Sacrament, of which we meet with three Acceptations.

1. It is taken for that yearly Solemnity which was celebrated on the 14th day of *Nisan* or *Abib*, our *March*, and call'd simply the Pascheover, or the Pascheover of the Lamb, because on that day towards the evening (or *inter duas vespervas*, as *Numb. 28. 4.* (*viz. declinationis & occasus solis*, not *vesperam solis & luminis*) the Israelites were commanded according to their Families to kill and roast a Lamb, and eat it in their private houses.

2. It signifies that yearly Festivity which was celebrated on the 15th of *Nisan*, and may be called the Pascheover of the Sheep or Bullock, *Deut. 16. 2.* or the Feast of the Pascheover, as *Numb. 28. 16, 17.* towards which Feast it was that *Josiah* gave such a multitude of Lambs, Kids, Sheep and Bulls.

3. It is taken for the whole Solemnity, beginning the

the 14th, and ending the 21st. of the same month, *Luke 22. 1.* Now the Feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called *Passeover*: so that in this Acception it contain'd the Feast of unleavened Bread also. But to speak properly, the Feast of unleavened Bread was a distinct Feast from the *Passeover*, For

1. The *Passeover* was to be kept on the 14th day of the first month at even, on which they were (as is confess'd) enjoined to eat unleavened Bread with the Lamb; but the Feast of unleavened Bread began not till the morrow following, *viz.* the 15th, and lasted seven days, of which only the first and last were Holy Convocations, in which they might do no servile work, *Levit. 23. 5, 6, 7, 8.*

2. The *Passeover* in the Age following its Institution, might not be kill'd and eaten in any other place, save only where the Lord did chuse to place his Name, which afterwards was at *Jerusalem*. But the Feast of unleavened Bread the Hebrews thought themselves bound to keep in every place, where-ever they dwelt, if they could not be at *Jerusalem*; and the eating of it, they say, depended not on the eating of the *Passeover*, but was a Commandment by it self: and both agree with the occasion of our present meeting, if we either consider

1. The Original. Or,

2. The Manner of its Observation.

1. The Original, Gods miraculous Preservation and Deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian Bondage and Darkness, and the destroying Angel his passing over their Houses, and sparing them and their Children when he smote the first-born of the Egyptians, (*Exod. 12. 30.*) and drowned *Pharaoh* and his Host
in

in the Red Sea, whiles the Israelites passed thorough it as by dry Land, (as *Heb. 11. 29.*) where both are mentioned. For the word *Passeover* comes not, as some of the Latine Fathers, (*viz. Tertullian and Ambrose*) from the Greek word *πάσχω* to suffer, because Christs Sufferings and Passions are now celebrated at this time, but from the Hebrew word *פסח* *transitus* or *transitio*, a passing over: which Etymology we have given by God himself, *Exod. 12. 27.* And hath not God passed over us? Are not several of us, as Brands plucked out of those flames, which reduced the greater part of this large City to Ashes? Were not we spared, whiles the Pestilence that walketh in darkness, and Destruction, that walketh at noon-day, swept away others?

The Plague and the Sword destroyed their thousands and ten thousands, and yet we are alive to praise God, as at this day.

God hath visited several places with blasting and mildew, and rain hath been withholden. We have lately felt unusually severe Winters, and had unseasonable Summers, of which Viols of Gods wrath we have but tasted, whiles others have drunk more deeply.

It is not long since we were threatned with stormy Winds and Tempests from North and West, and these Euroclydons descended on several places with confused noise, and many garments were rolled in blood, [*Isa. 9. 5.*] whiles we, and other Inhabitants of the County we belong to, felt none of these Hurricanes, heard only the sound of it, as a going on the top of the Mulberry-trees, were permitted to stand still and see the Salvation of the Lord.

After Wars and Rumours of Wars; former sad confusions,

fusions, and late menacing disturbances, we renew this Solemnity upon Gods restoring to us a Publick Peace, our Ancient Regal Government in State, and the Apostolical, Episcopal Government in the Church. And thus the Originals of the Feasts agree.

2. There is also a suitableness in the manner of the Observation.

It is not to be kept with old Leaven, &c. Then which I know no better direction for the right using and improving this and all other Solemnities of this Nature.

Leaven is properly that which secretly and speedily soures the whole lump of dough, altering the Nature of it. Sometimes it is used in a good sense,

1. To denote the Kingdom or Church of Christ on Earth, increasing secretly and by degrees both in number of Persons and Graces of the Spirit, *Matt. 13. 33.*

2. The Doctrine of the Gospel, the Word preached, which altereth a mans Nature, first turning his heart, and changing his inward, and then reforming his outward man.

Sometimes (as here) Leaven is taken in an ill sense, and so used,

1. To represent the unsound Doctrine of Hereticks, corrupting the sweetness of heavenly Truths with their false Glosses: called also Hypocrisie, because such Doctrines are false, deceitful, and impious, and make their Fautors and Fomentors Hypocrites, *Matt. 16. 6. Luke 12. 1.*

2. Corrupt, vicious persons, which with their company and communication infect others, *1 Cor. 15. 33.*

Old Leaven is the same with the old man, *Rom. 6. 6.*

Fermen-

of Christian Feasts.

II

Fermentum in massa, innata vitiositas, Original sin, with the depravation, the whole naughtiness of our sinful Nature with its sinful effects and bitter fruits, whatever it is that hath a faculty of corrupting others, whether it be Doctrine or Example; it follows

The Leaven of Malice and Wickedness, which is exegetical, an illustration of the former, *κακίας & πονηρίας malitiæ & versutiæ*, craft added to wickedness, *malus est qui male, nequam qui cum dolo agit*; hence the Devil is called subtle, *ωμνός*, as some from *πρωτος*, ago, *factus, nobis factus negotium*, 1 John 2. 12. Eph. 6. 16. he hath his wiles and stratagems, his cunning crafts.

Of sincerity and Truth, an expression taken from counterfeit Wares, such as need the false light of a dark Shop to put them off. There must be Purity or Holiness, plain dealing, and singleness of heart.

The Christians have their Passover; *ἡμέρα δὲ σωτηρίας, festum agitemus*, let us keep the Feast, not typically, only for a day, as at present, or for seven days, as the Jews the Passover, but spiritually throughout the whole course of our lives.

The Ceremony of the Jews putting away Leaven out of their houses, during the time of the Feast, signifies, that from the first day we believe in Christ thorough the whole course of our lives, we should purge our selves from evil Doctrine and corrupt Manners.

The spiritual estate of Christians is the true accomplishment of the Jewish Passover; nay every Congregation should put away those that are scandalous, as 1 Cor. 5. 5. applied by the Apostle.

Also the Ceremony of the Leprosie,

1. If doubtful, shut up till certain, *Levit. 13. 44.*
2. If clear, dwelling alone without the Camp,

Household-stuff two or three days before.

2. *Inquisitio Fermenti*, searching every corner, to a Mouse-hole with a Wax-candle the night before the Passeeover, till the fourth hour after Sun-rising, as *Buxtorfe*.

3. *Exterminatio* or *Conflagratio* from the fourth hour to the sixth.

4. *Execratio*, of all seen or not seen, cleansed or not cleansed; nor are the best Christians less concerned to look about them, lest there be any root of bitterness springing up to their trouble, whereby themselves and others may be defiled, *Heb. 12. 15*.

We often change our bread and our water, and, however sound and wholesom the Country may be we come from, we are in danger of infection from the different Airs we breathe in, or may receive Contagion from some of those many persons we converse with, and a little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump.

God made man upright, but he hath sought forth many Inventions. Good Wheat was laid in at first; but, whiles men slept, the Enemy sow'd Tares, *Matt. 13. 27*.

When there was no King in *Israel*, every man did what was good in his own sight.

That Anarchy and those Confusions, under which this Nation of ours hath groan'd for several years, have given too much opportunity to the evil Willers of our *Sion* to unsettle, divide, distract, and corrupt several of its Members. And therefore First,

1. We are to beware of the *Leaven of Atheism*.

It's scarce credible in such a Land as ours, amongst us who have had the Noon-day-light of the Gospel, as well as all other advantages for the improvement of

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our natural Light and acquired Knowledge, that any should dare to question so clear and undeniable a Truth: the Heavens and the Earth may be astonished at this; *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament shews his handy work*, Psal. 19. 1. *The invisible things of God from the Creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse*, Rom. 1. 20.

We have in our selves a demonstration, *quælibet herba Denm.* the most minute Creature speaks a Deity, much more the frame of man, who is fearfully and wonderfully made, *Psal.* 139. 14.

And yet, besides practical Atheists (which all sinners are (*Psal.* 36. 2.) there are in our days to be met with those that set their mouths against Heaven, and their tongue walketh thorough the Earth; *How*, say they, *doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?* *Psal.* 73. 9, 11.

What *Luther* abhorr'd himself for thinking, we have Monsters belch out; *Horribilia de Deo, terribilia de Fide.* *Dauids* Fool or wicked man was modest in respect of the Atheists of our days, he whispered to himself, *said in his heart, There is no God, but these avow it in their Principles.*

All such are indeed without hope and without the true God to serve him and depend upon him, but are slaves to a false one, the Devil, call'd the God of this World, the Prince of the power of the Air, the Spirit that works in the children of disobedience, and hath blinded their minds, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine in unto them; Such shall find God hereafter in his Justice,

stice, when there will be no place for Repentance.

It will be then in vain to call to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb: it will be bootless to plead they are the workmanship of his hands. They are a people of no understanding; those that live and die in such an open defiance of God and their duty, he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour, *Isa. 27. 11.*

When men of such Principles fall in our way, we must do more then shun them our selves, we must be zealous in so great a matter, withstand them to the face, *Gal. 2. 11.* write a cross on their doors, and set a mark on their persons, that others may avoid them.

If the Leprosie was in an house, none were to sleep in it; and if in garments, they were to be burnt with fire.

2. *The Leaven of Rebellion*; and 'tis no wonder, when men have cast off the fear of God, they should prove false to their Prince. Tears and Prayers are the right Weapons of the Church.

That thundring Legion that storm'd Heaven with their Prayers, and rose not from their knees, until God gave them rain; laid down their Arms, and offered their lives to death, rather then they would oppose their Prince, or deny the True God, and worship Idols.

And it is the glory of our Religion, and the Church of *England* in an especial manner, that it gives not the least countenance to Disloyalty, and admits of no colour or pretence of resistance whatsoever.

The Scriptures we owne are as plain and full as words.

words can express, every Soul is to be subject to the higher Powers for Gods sake, and for Conscience sake, and those that resist, resist the Ordinance of God, and shall receive damnation to themselves, *Rom. 13. 1, 2. Tit. 3. 1. and 2 Pet. 2. 13.*

Dauids heart smote him for the cutting off the lap of Sauls garment, and we are advised, in prudence, as well as conscience not to curse the King, no not in our thoughts; for God hath the Sacred persons of Kings so much under his protection, that he often goeth out of the ordinary way of his Providence, and works a Miracle rather then Treachery against them should prosper, Eccles. 10 20. A bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

These filthy Dreamers that despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignities, they are spots in all Feasts as well as those of Charity, *Jude 12, 13. Clouds they are without water, carried about with wind, trees whose fruit is withered, twice dead, plucked up by the roots, raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame, wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.*

3. The Leaven of Herod, or the Leaven of Faction, Fox like Subtleties, or contagious Principles.

Herod was a subtle Fox, as our Saviour calls him, Go tell that Fox, a Slave to Ambition and Lust, and a Creature to Cæsar, on whose pleasure he held his Dignity. He heard John Baptist, and pretended to hearken to him [Mark 6. 20.] but sacrificed him to the jealousy of Herodias. He desired to see Christ; possibly to satisfy his curiosity, or to have been magnified by some Miracle he hoped to have done him, or rather to dispatch him, as we find it suggested

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to our Saviour, *Herod seeks to kill thee*, a Copy *Herod* his Predecessor had set him. He tamper'd with the *Magi* (*Matt. 2.*) that he might find out him that was born King of the Jews, on a pretence to worship him; but, how he would have made him a Deity, appears by his butchering afterwards, for his sake about fourteen thousand, all the children of that age about two years old and under in *Bethlehem*.

The *Herodians* were Parasites in their Courts, that varied their Religion with them, made one of the *Herods* a God, and kept his Birth-day, heard our Saviour, and propos'd ensnaring questions to entrap him.

And such are our Seekers in Discipline, Abettors of Faction, those who fit up Religion after mens Humours to serve a turn, mould up Gods Worship with *Herods* and *Jeroboams* ends, and watch for our halting.

Herod would be exalted, arrays himself in costly Apparel, gets into the Throne, courts the Applause of the Rabble, and is pleas'd to be the Idol of the People, though he dies their Martyr, and is eaten up of worms, *Acts 12.20.* Like *Saul* to *Samuel*, come what will, yet honour me before the Elders of *Israel*.

Jeroboam must have his Conventicles, and sets up his Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*; makes a rent in the Church to patch up the flaws of his Title to the ten Tribes.

Korah, *Dathan* and *Abiram* were too proud to obey *Moses* and *Aaron*, and would set up Independency under a pretence of zeal for God and the Priviledges of the People. Hear their Canting, *All the Lords people are holy*, *Numb. 16. 3.*

Diotrephes loves the preheminance, and makes such

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a Schism,

a Schism, that St. *John* cannot be received, though a beloved Disciple, a Bishop, and an eminent Apostle, 3 *John* 9.

The Instances of Schism and Faction amongst us have been too many for me either to recal or recite. We have had attempts on our Doctrine, our Discipline, our Worship, all slandered and misrepresented by men of different Interests and Opinions, the Word of God miserably wrested by some, and excepted against by others, traduced as a dead letter, supplanted by Traditions, and subordinated to Enthusiasms; our Sacraments have been questioned, their Original disputed, and their number and way of administration impeach'd, our Churches have been prophaned, our Liturgy decry'd, Episcopacy struck at (and for some years removed) root and branch. The very function of the Ministry proclaimed useless, and their maintenance burthenfom, a yoke intolerable; though no man pays of his own amongst us, unless his piety excite him to be a Benefactor.

As *Jannes* and *Jambres* withstood *Moses*, so men of corrupt minds, and Reprobate concerning the Faith, do still resist the Truth, rent the seamless Coat of Christ, and disturb the Peace and Government of the Church. And all this with an *Hofanna*, The Lord be glorified. A solemn pretence to do God service, *Isa*, 66. 5. *John* 16. 2.

It is very sad that Religion should be abused to serve mens corrupt and sinister designs, but no more than foretold, and continually practised by ill men, as well as by the Devil, who, upon this occasion can be content to appear in *Samuels* Mantle, (1 *Sam*. 28. 14.) and transform himself into an Angel of Light.
This

This I can say boldly. Had it been as easie to gratifie mens Interests, and satisfie their Humours, as it is to answer their Arguments, the breaches in our Church and State had been all closed long e're now.

God hath smitten the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts, Amos 6. 11. which divisions of our *Reuben* call for sad thoughts, great searchings of heart; but this is our comfort, the Devil hath his Limits, and God who hath made the sand a Boundary to the waves of the Sea by a perpetual Decree, so, that though they roar and lift up themselves, they cannot pass over it, he hath limited his Instruments, these Children of the Devil, and Enemies of all Righteousness, that will not cease to pervert the ways of God, *Acts* 13. 10. when their Ephah is full, and their sins ripe, they shall proceed no further, but their folly shall be manifest to all men, as that of *Jan-nes* and *Jambres* also was, (2 *Tim.* 3. 8.) or as it fared with *Elymas*, who was stricken with blindness, God shall send them strong delusions, and give them up to feared Consciences, they shall split themselves on the rocks of Superstition and Atheism, or loose themselves in a Labyrinth, the mazes and mists of Errour, and at last seek about for some to lead them, *Acts* 13. 11.

God hath given us many sad Examples; *Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall,* 2 *Thess.* 2. 10.

For the Glory of God and Honour of our Country, let us persevere in Religion and Loyalty.

4. *The Leaven of the Sadducees*, or the Leaven of Doctrine, *Matt.* 16. 5. 6.

The Doctrine of the Pharisees had its Leaven, but the Sadducees were were most tainted.

The Sadducees call'd in question Angels and Spirits, denied rewards or punishments after this life, held the Soul was annihilated at death, believed not the Resurrection, maintain'd free will and liberty of prophesying, allow'd of no Scripture but the Pentateuch, the five Books of *Moses*, (*Matt.* 22. 23. *Mark* 12. 18. *Luke* 20. 27. *Acts* 4. 1.) and therefore our Saviour convinceth them out of *Exodus*, Chap. 3. 6. *Matt.* 22. 32.

Hymeneus and *Philetus*, who say the Resurrection is already past, viz. that there is no Resurrection but the spiritual, that of the Soul from sin, or the renewing of the state of the World under the Gospel. These and all other profane and vain babblings are to be shun'd, *2 Tim.* 2. 16. for they will increase to more ungodliness, and their words will eat as doth a canker.

The *Athenians* spent their time in hearing and telling some new thing, *Acts* 17. 21. and it is the Character of our Novellists, that they have itching ears, and heap to themselves Teachers, which argues they are carnal, cannot endure sound Doctrine, and have not the Spirit, as the Apostle determines, *2 Tim.* 4. 3.

For our parts, we are to continue in the good old way, confirm our selves in the Truths we have heard and been assured of, hold fast the form of sound words, and contend for the Doctrine delivered to the Saints.

If any man teach otherwise, and consents not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godli-

godliness: from all such, St. Paul tells us, we must withdraw our selves, 1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5.

5. *The Leaven of the Pharisees, or Hypocrisie.* The Pharisees were full of corrupt Glosses, addicted much to Superstition, prescribed Phylacteries, ty'd themselves to Phrases and Observances, and little else, were all for leaves and no fruit, and *taught for Doctrines the Commandments of men*, Matt. 15. 9. But, *Wo to him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach: behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it*, Hab. 2. 19.

The Pharisee had the Hypocrite (leaven) in his face, to make him look sour, that men might see he had fasted.

Rabbi in his tongue and rancour in his heart, they would speak Christ fair, when they came to intrap him, and give him with *Judas* a kiss, and an hail Master, at the same time they betrayed him; they are all *Gabbatha*, whited Sepulchres, beautiful without, but *Golgotha*, full of rottenness, skulls and dead mens bones within, pay Tithes of Mint and Cummin, and neglect the greater matters of the Law, compass Sea and Land to make their Profelytes, shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men, neither enter themselves, nor suffer others, make long Prayers for a pretence, and devour widows houses, cleanse the outside of the cup, but stuff the inside with extortion and excess.

Our Religion teacheth us another Lesson, that bodily exercise profiteth little, and that we should exercise our selves to real godliness, which hath the promises of this life and that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. God is a Spirit, calls for truth in the inward parts, and

and will be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth, *John* 4. 24. Man judgeth by the outward appearance, but God looketh to the heart, *1 Sam.* 16. 5.

From those who have but a form of godliness, and deny the power, we are to turn away, *2 Tim.* 3. 3.

6. *The Leaven of Covetousness and Oppression.* We must not curse the deaf, or lay a stumbling block before the blind, we are to injure none; but 'tis barbarous to wrong those that cannot help themselves, or know not when we hurt them: this is to turn judgment into gall, and righteousness into wormwood.

We are to oppress none but the Man of Sin, and covet only the best gifts.

When the noise of Arms was so loud, that the voice of the Law could not be heard, *Demetrius* and his Crafts-men, such who served not God, but the *Diana* of their Interest, carved to themselves largely out of other mens Estates, catch as catch might, 'twas a levelling Age, the Bishops Lands were made Lay-Fees, and the Tithes of the Church were in great danger of being gathered into a common Treasury, the better to support the Publick Faith: Encroachments were made generally, and most on the Rights of the Church, which, having now had the continuance of many years, it is not easie to find them out, and 'tis harder to recover them; Sacriledge is grown rife, and of so potent an Interest, that he had need be a man of courage that dares arraign it for a sin. It was an observation of an eminently wise man, the Oracle of his Age, That though Truth can never be justly blamed, yet he that followeth it too close at the heels, may have his teeth struck out, not only be forc'd to loose his hold, but made incapable of fastening ever after.

But

But if men will not consider, God will remember. There is a wo reserved for him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house ; *For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it,* Hab. 2.

One Acre of ill gotten Land entails a curse upon a whole Estate, and some mens houses (as the Learned *Spelman* observes and proves) might have continued longer in their Names and Families, if they had not set their nests on fire by coals thus snatch'd from the Altar. May *Nehemiahs* resolution be taken up by every one of us, *That we will not forget the house of our God,* Nehem. 10. 39.

As the Partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool, Jer. 17. 11.

When our Saviour became *Zacheus* his Guest, and brought his welcome with him, Salvation to his house (*Luke* 19. 5.) he received him joyfully, and, that he might purge himself from the Leaven of oppression, he makes a fourfold restitution to all that he had wrong'd by any false accusation.

Whoever they are that at any time meet with a Babylonish garment, or *Acans* wedge amongst their own or others stuff, it should be their care to see them restored to their proper owners and uses, and (where that cannot be done) return'd to God and his poor. It is the blessing of God makes rich.

Whatsoever we would that men should do unto us, that should we do unto them, for this is the Law and the Prophets, Matt. 7. 12.

7. Farther, *The Leaven of corrupt Society* : Men either

ther unsound in their Principles, or vicious and irregular in their Practices; evil Doctrine is against Truth, evil lives are against walking in the Truth, and evil company leads to both. No man can touch pitch, but he must be defiled, *Evil communications corrupt good manners*, 1 Cor. 15. 33.

We are (if possibly) to live peaceably with all men, and may hold a commerce with men of different Religions, promise to do them good and no hurt, and be ready to do them kindneses, *Gen. 26. 29.* but we must not so help the ungodly, as to love them which hate God, 2 *Chron. 19. 2.* A league of amity is not to be held with the Sons of *Belial*, men of desperate Principles and Lives are not to be taken into our bosoms; If we will *fear God and the King*, we must not meddle with those that are given to change, with such we are to have no familiar converse, no not to eat, 1 Cor. 5. 11.

Our eyes are to be on the faithful in the land, and our delight in the just, *Psal. 16. 5.*

He that abideth in a perfect way may abide with us.

Those who thus walk with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of Fools shall be destroy'd.

8. Lastly, *The Leaven of Malice and Wickedness*: Malice, like Leaven, makes men swell one against another, envying and strife breed confusion and every evil work, and come not from above, but are earthly, sensual and devillish, *Jam. 3.*

By Nature since the Fall, man is of a wrathful, revengeful, contentious disposition, we are, as ravenous beasts, apt to bite and devour each other. It was an evil Character the Prophet gave of that people, *Jer. 9. 4.*
that

that every brother would utterly supplant, and every neighbour walk with slanders, and I wish there were no such thing amongst us; Our late unnatural Wars have altered very much the estate of this Nation, and made deep impressions upon our very Natures.

Differences in Judgments have bred coldness of Affections, and our Civil Jars have wrought strangeness in Relations. We have seen (what our Saviour foretold) divisions in Families, as well as in the Nation, five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three, *Matt. 10. 35. The son against the father, and the daughter against the mother, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law, a mans foes often those of his own house*, no safety in relying on either Neighbour or Brother; nay men were not secure, unless they kept the door of their lips from her that lay in their bosoms, *Mic. 7. 16.*

And this the product, not of Religion, but Corruption. The wisdom that comes from above is, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be intreated, full of good fruit, without partiality, and without hypocrisie.

By the Spirit mans Nature is altered, *Isa. 11. 6. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lye down with the kid, the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.*

When *Jerusalem* was the glory of the whole world, it was a City compact together, and the Citizens all of one mind, *Psal. 122. 3.*

Where Unity is wanting, men can have neither comfort nor safety to live by each other; the quicker mens parts, the more cunning they are to outreach and undermine; and the greater their power,

the more mighty they are to oppress.

'Tis a security to this Island that it lies by it self, divided from other Nations, call'd by one a Great Beast, that cannot be destroy'd, without being accessary to its own ruine; and it's our great danger to be divided amongst our selves; two are better then one, and a triple cord is not easily broken.

Our business this day is Union and Society, such Meetings as these are of a reconciling Nature. 'Tis high time to lay aside all invidious names, all unkind distinctions.

Let not any such Shiboleths be so much as named amongst us.

All bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking must be put away from us with all malice, and we are to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christs sake hath forgiven us, Eph. 4. 32, 33.

We are all English-men, we are Country-men, there must be no difference, no strangeness amongst us, for we are Brethren; to go higher, we are Christians, *We have one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, and should keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace, Eph. 3. 4, 5.* This is to be a new Lump, all of a piece.

In Heaven where the blessed Angels and Spirits of men made perfect (the Church Triumphant) abide, there is a sweet and constant agreement; and in the purest times of the Church Militant, the Believers *were all of one heart and one mind, Acts 4. 32.* nay, 'tis the mark whereby our Saviour would have his Disciples known from the rest of the world, and from Hypocrites, *their loving one another, John 13. 35.*
And

And 'twas practis'd in the primitive Times to the glory of the Gospel, and astonishment of their Adversaries, *See (say they) how the Christians love one another.*

From henceforth let me beg, that this may be the only contention amongst us, who shall be the sincerest Christians, the most Loyal Subjects, the truest Friends, and the most useful Country-men.

Let as many of us as be perfect, be thus minded, and if any be otherwise minded, God shall reveal this unto them.

And thus we are duly qualify'd to make a Feast.

Epulemur; So some expound, what others render *celebremus*, *Keep a Feast*, and both proper, the word reacheth both, we cannot keep a Feast, unless we make it. A Feast implies a Banquet, provision more then ordinary upon some solemn occasion, to remember some great Mercy of God, and withal to chear the heart. When God bestows signal Mercies, he expects suitable acknowledgments, *Psal. 50. 15.*

And great cause we have to Feast, to bless God, and rejoyce before him.

As Christians, so from the Argument in the Context, *Christ our Passeeover is sacrificed for us.* The Birth of Christ was *Tidings of great joy to all people*, *Luke 2. 10.* and was celebrated with the Hallelujahs of the heavenly Host. His Incarnation was a Mystery hid from Ages, which the Angels desired to pry into; but, if he had not been bruised for our iniquities, we had not been healed from them, *Isa 53. 5.* It is our security and rejoycing that he hath suffered, and *is risen again for our Justification*, *Rom. 8. 34.*

As English-men (besides those many National deli-

verances before mentioned) we are to praise Him for giving us our Lot in the Garden of *Eden*, the Paradise of the World, the Nursery of Arts and Learning, a *Goshen* for light and knowledge, not only of the Volumes of Nature, but of the Books of God; enrich'd with all those Blessings that may make our lives comfortable here, and us happy hereafter.

For our particular Country, we may say our Lines are fallen in a pleasant place; whether we view our Chiltern or our Vale, consider Pastime, Health, or Profit, we have a goodly Heritage, well watered, as the Garden of the Lord: Our dwelling is *the Fatness of the Earth*, and *the Dew of Heaven from above*, Gen. 27. 39. We have a *Benjamin's* share in those many Blessings, which God hath heaped upon this Nation.

It is not enough to bring forth the best Robes, the costly Ring, to kill the fattest Calf, and to eat and drink, and to be merry, and to give our Fragments to the Poor, (*Luke 15. 21.*) though all this be proper at such a time as this; This is not all, the principal part is behind, *Psal. 50. 13.* we must offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay our vows to the most High: This shall please God better than an whole Hecatomb of Oxen that have horns and hoofs, *Psal. 69. 31.*

We are not to keep,

1. An Epicures Feast, *To eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye*; eat only for eatings sake: *Indulgere Genio*, to indulge our selves, and gratifie our palates, this is to make a God of our Belly, and to glory in our shame, such are *Enemies to the Cross of Christ*, *Phil. 3. 19.* *Job* sent for his Sons, and sanctified them continually after Feasting, *Job 1. And whether we eat*

or

or drink, or whatever we do, we are to do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10. 31. and to this end we must not

2. Keep a Feast, like *Nabal*, who held a Feast in his house, like the Feast of a King, yet had nothing but a churlish Answer to spare, not so much as a Good word to give.

Whiles we drink Wine in Bowls, we must not forget the Afflictions of *Joseph*.

Nehemiahs Rule was, *They should eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared, Nehem. 8. 10.*

And the Royal Psalmist, at his Feast, upon the bringing back the Ark, dealt to every one of *Israel*, both man and woman, to every one a Loaf of bread, a good piece of Flesh, and a Flagon of wine, *1 Chron. 16. 3.*

I know these good Examples were not well followed, sometimes large Portions were sent to the disfurnishing of the Table, and incommoding the proper Guests, and some stay'd away to receive greater shares, then they should have had, if present, which lessen'd the Appearance; and these were the occasions of the *Laodicean* Canon to regulate this Abuse, and alter the Custom.

I need not either question or direct your Charity. The Wisdom of this Age hath found out a better Method to gather and dispose (with Judgment) of what is given to good and charitable Uses; yet, seeing you have thought fit to call me hither, I shall take the freedom (in a word or two more) to be your Remembrancer.

No man is born for himself, but for God and for his Country, and each of us should so live, that we may bring Glory to one, and be of Use in the other.

It's below a reasonable Creature to cumber the Earth, and bring forth no fruit, *Telluris inutile pondus.*

Dauids question is to be every good mans care, to be *rendering to God for all his benefits*, *Psal. 116. 11.*

We vindicate our Religion, and convince the World that we are more then Solifidians, when we shew our Faith by our Works; To be barren in them argues Leanness in our Souls, *Psal. 106. 15.*

Our Country is fertile, our Soil fat and rich, we credit that, as well as shew our own tendernefs, when our Compassions are enlarged.

Zacheus gave half his Goods to the Poor, and the Primitive Christians sold their Houses and Possessions, and put all into the Apostles hands for the use of the Church. Every Sabbatical year, and at the Jubilee, the Jews released Servants, cancelled Mortgages, and discharged all Debtors. God requires no such great things from us, yet expects from every one some Return; Every one hath his Talent.

Those that are not able to build and endow Churches, or erect Hospitals, may repair the living Temples of the Holy Ghost, give *Dorcas* her Coats, put somewhat into the *Conclave Silentum*, the poor mans Chest. The Widows Mites are kindly taken, those that cannot give themselves, may perswade, and direct to others that are more able; *If there be first a willing mind*, something may be done, and it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what a man hath not, *2 Cor. 8. 12.*

He that giveth to the Poor lendeth to the Lord, and what we may spare cannot be put into a surer hand or better way of improvement, for he will surely pay it again, to some thirty, to some sixty, to some

some an hundred-fold ; what we do to Christ's Brethren, He takes as done unto himself, and will not suffer a cup of cold water given to a Disciple in the name of a Disciple, to loose its reward.

No man ever lost by thus serving God : He that telleth our wandrings, and puts our Tears into his Bottle, keeps a Book of Remembrance for our Prayers and Almsdeeds. To do good and to communicate, therefore, I beseech you, forget not, for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be Glory, Honour, and Power hence and for ever, Rev. 7. 12.

FINIS.
